1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

244 The sizes of the talo tubers are: *piki* (small corms), *vaerapa* (slightly larger corms), *vaisei aoitu* (still larger corms), *ulupoko* (very big corms), and *punia* (enormous ones, as big as *pulaka* corms and no longer good for eating).

A good commentary on the cultivation of talo is found in the first section of the chant, "Maka te kupu ki te tonoanga", in praise of a woman's skill at talo growing (1).

DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

Gifts

433 571 431 Much of the produce of labor is used for immediate consumption by the worker and his household. The talo harvested by the women of the household, the mats they plait, the fish and nuts produced by the men, the house that is built by a man, are all consumed by the household group. Some of the wealth of the household—whether food or more durable articles such as pearl-shell fishhooks and ornaments—is distributed through the gift exchange or as payment to workers who are producing other objects of value for the household. Another part of this wealth is distributed through the feasts that mark crises in the lives of the individual members of the group.

Most gifts require a reciprocal gift of equivalent value. When members of one household have more than they can immediately consume they give staple articles such as food, fish, talo and nuts to relatives and friends, but only on the assumption that everyone in the community is following the same social principle and that the gift will be reciprocated at some later occasion when the recipients are well provided with food. One widow 431 and her young children are frequently given gifts of food, fish especially, by relatives and neighbors without, I think, any feeling that the widow should or could reciprocate. The villagers are sorry for her plight and give out of pity and neighborly feelings. [574] Gifts to transient visitors on the island are made freely and without thought of return; the tradition of hospitality requires the expression of friendship through the making of gifts. Gifts to more permanent visitors are made within terms of the implicit system of gift exchange, but insofar as the givers are many and the recipients are few, the return gift is not expected to equal the value of the first gift. The return gift in this case merely symbolizes the completion of the transaction, and honor is satisfied on both sides.

Various types of gifts are named according to the way they enter into the system of exchange:

431 195 The word *tauvaloa* is applied to a family heirloom, a pearl-shell ornament for instance, an appropriate gift to a living person. *Tauvaloa* is also a gift of remembrance when two friends part from each other. Such a gift is referred to metaphori-

:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

Pukapukan food is invariably dry food that can be divided into separate shares without the aid of food containers other than the coconut platter and coconut shell. This sharing pattern leads to the grumbling of the *kaitangi*, the person who thinks he has been given less than his rightful share of food in the food division, whether of household or village feast. There are many references in the stories to trouble caused by people who were *kaitangi*. To a person who grumbles about his food, the classic reply is, "Wano koe ammai te kaitangi no Yele" (Go and get the food share that did not satisfy Yele), the implication being that even if the *kaitangi's* food shares were as large as Yele's in the story (1), he would still be dissatisfied. In another story, that of Watu-manava-nui, it is the dissatisfaction of Kumawawine that leads her to betray her own Yayake people to the Tongan warriors, with the result that all her people, including herself, were killed by the Tongans and Pukapukans. The person who grumbles over his share of nuts is told, "Wano koe ki te niu o Totoloa" (Go to the nut tree of Totoloa). This refers to the god Totoloa's magical tree from which a nut was picked, eaten, and then put together again and thrown into the tree, where it flourished as before.

SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Because old age does not bring with it fear of economic insecurity, there is no incentive to hoard wealth. Old people are cared for by children and relatives, and no one ever suffers from lack of food or shelter. The life of the lazy man might be materially easy, but he would suffer much through ridicule; there would be few whose pride could stand the blow of being allotted only a child's share of food. It is noteworthy that laziness never enters as a theme of stories.

The village of Ngake makes more copra than the other villages and each person in Ngake receives slightly more money from the proceeds of the semi-annual sale of copra than do the people of the other villages, but this does not mean that the increased wealth of Ngake villagers can be used to tyrannize over the other two villages. The money is spent on clothes or tobacco and increases personal prestige, not economic power.

The economic system is so well integrated with environment and social structure that it has stood firm under the impact of an alien culture when other aspects of Pukapukan society have been lost. Needs are well provided for, individual skill is appreciated, insecurity is absent, and the accumulation of wealth has for its end redistribution in the interests of increased prestige. Minor flaws in the system come from occasional inequalities in food distribution; these are temporary and never serious enough to disrupt the functioning of the major patterns, which draw their strength from the basic social structure.